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THE FLYLEAF

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THE J. RUSSELL WAIT COLLECTION

The Librarian is happy to announce the safe arrival of the J. Russell Wait Collection, weight 1540 pounds. Mr. Wait, formerly Director of the Port of Houston and holder of many other important posts in the engineering and maritime world, has collected and classified the professional papers of a long and useful life and presented them to the Fondren Library. The presentation was made on Mr. Wait's eighty-fifth birthday, October 6, at the Cohen House, with a luncheon gathering of university officials, members of Mr. Wait's family, and other friends. Mr. and Mrs. Wait made the trip from Kerrville, their present home, for the occasion. Dr. Pitzer accepted the collection on behalf of Rice University and its library.

The letters and papers are the heart of the Wait Collection, an extensive gathering largely devoted to

harbors, ships and port installations: a sampling of the folders under the letter "G" will show the range: Geodetic Charts, Grain Elevator, Grain Treatment, Green's Bayou, Gulf Ports Association. There is material on almost every port in the United States and Canada, from Albany, New York, to Vancouver, British Columbia.

Moreover the Collection is rich in photographs: thousands of pictures, mounted in albums and indexed, which illustrate many of the port and shipping subjects which are represented in the papers. If there is not a picture of every ship which entered the Port of Houston during Mr. Wait's 17-year incumbency as Director, it would be hard indeed to detect the omission.

The Collection is further enhanced by a well-chosen library of several hundred books. As one would expect, these are largely devoted to shipping, ports and railroads; but there is also a section on World War II, and a special group of Texana. A perhaps-unique part of the book collection is a set of 100 volumes of the National Geographic, remarkable in that each volume is

made up of articles on a special topic or country; over the years, Mr. Wait divided up the Geographics as they came in and had them rebound according to this interesting and useful plan.

The Librarian wishes to express his heartfelt thanks to Mr. Wait for his generosity in giving this collection to Rice, where the donor can be assured it will be appreciated and well cared for. Equally sincere thanks should go to Mrs. Wait, who was herself formerly executive secretary to the Port Commission in Houston and who was of great assistance in getting the papers into their well-docketed condition.

It is the special hope of the Librarian, reflecting his personal interest, that the Fondren will grow strong in its holdings on naval and maritime subjects, particularly those associated with the Gulf Coast. The J. Russell Wait Collection gives the Library a giant step forward toward this goal.

It should also be emphasized that these books, professional papers and pictures constitute a monument

to Mr. Wait himself, a man who was the foe of special privilege and always worked for fair dealing and equal terms for all in the exercise of his official functions.

H.C.

THE REGIONAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE:
A Cooperative Enterprise for Colleges and Universities

The Regional Information and Communication Exchange, described in the July FLYLEAF as it applied to Gulf Coast business, commerce, and industry, has an aspect of special interest to Rice University and the other colleges and universities which are contributing their library resources to its operation.

There is, in the first place, the Exchange's concern for library resources. It has been pointed out many times that the library resources of the South-Southwest are relatively weak compared to the East and Midwest and that they remain so despite remarkable efforts to add to them. Rice University and the University of Houston, for example, spent more money for books, periodicals, and binding last year than all except the four largest university libraries (those of Harvard, Yale, Illinois, and Michigan) spent in 1953-54. In the decade beginning with that fiscal year

Rice's expenditure for these purposes increased by about 332 per cent while Michigan's increased only by 131 per cent. Our collection experienced a 92 per cent growth increase in that time; Michigan's was only about 40 per cent. Nevertheless, Michigan added to its collection almost four times the number of volumes we added, so strong was their financial and materials base by that time.

We are led to think, therefore, that new ways must be found to make the dollar expended for library materials here and anywhere in "Exchange territory" go as far as possible in adding strength. The problem is always complicated by the annual increase in book prices; in late years this has averaged 7 per cent.

Despite a history of cooperative effort and spirit among libraries of this region, little is known about the actual strengths and weaknesses of most of the academic libraries. Dr. Edward G. Holley, Jr., Director of Libraries, the University of Houston, and Dr. Donald Hendricks, Director of Libraries at Sam Houston State

College, have recently completed, but not yet published the results of, a survey of academic library resources throughout Texas. This is the first survey of its kind in this area, and one that makes use of the methods successfully employed by Dean Robert L. Downs of the University of Illinois Library in surveying Missouri and North Carolina libraries. Since this survey will identify specialized resources, it will be incumbent on the staff of the Information Exchange to make careful use of the results.

The college libraries that are actual or potential members of the Exchange vary in size from around 25,000 volumes to 550,000 volumes. This variation could suggest to the larger libraries that the smaller institutions lack resources of interest and that these merely duplicate others' holdings. Some persons might conclude that there is little to be gained from developing direct contacts with the smaller libraries beyond producing a one-way transfer of resources. Fortunately, there are many safeguards already in force against this

situation as well as evidence that some of the smaller libraries have strong resources in specific subject areas which are unique in the area and of interest to all.

The Exchange, while working with academic libraries in the region to serve business, commerce, and industry with technical information, hopes to bring all academic libraries into closer contact and to influence the acquisitions policy of the cooperating institutions. It also expects to initiate a cooperative program in acquisitions as a collateral research and development program closely connected with the Fondren's library automation project and participation in the Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC) Pilot Project of the Library of Congress.

This year the Fondren received a special benefit from Title II A of the Higher Education Act of 1965 because of the combination-of-institutions aspect of the Exchange. We applied for a Special Purpose Grant under this title and received one of approximately 350

that will be awarded nationally. Those institutions were eligible which are members of combinations of institutions and which show, among other things, (1) that either data processing and information storage and retrieval equipment is used, and (2) that modern communications equipment is used to facilitate transmission of information among the cooperating institutions.

From now on there is likely to be emphasis in awarding grants of this sort to academic resource libraries which are not only in need of additional library resources but which are willing to share resources bibliographically and physically through the medium of such organizations as the Exchange.

The Fondren has a proposal under consideration now with a major agency that would expand this role of regional bibliographic center. The plan would attract support for science education and research throughout the region through its provision to serve as a central facility for pooling the library resources of those academic members of the Information Exchange willing to

cooperate. The proposal seeks additional funding (1) to support the teletype link among these libraries, (2) to use the library-housed computer to compile a bibliographic record of regional holdings, (3) to provide directed access to the resources of participating institutions, (4) to furnish guidance to libraries interested in computer applications for libraries, (5) to bring representatives of participating institutions together to discuss regional problems in building library resources, and (6) to foster the development of centralized processing for regional academic libraries. By associating this project with the Information Exchange we expect to expand the resources of the region by providing access to other regions and other libraries throughout the state and nation.

The Exchange should promote resource building throughout the region which will, in turn, provide more information for business, commerce, and industry. Industry may then be willing to provide through membership in the Exchange the additional funding required

to develop automated library processes throughout the region which contribute to bibliographic control and access.

The development of regional networks like this one is logically related to the development of a national information network to be linked in time to foreign libraries and networks via communication satellites.

The importance of such developments upon university education, upon research, and upon business and commerce is self-evident. Our objective in the Exchange is to work for these developments and to bring their best results to bear on education and research in the Gulf Coast region.

Richard L. O'Keeffe
Associate Librarian
Fondren Library

THE FURTWANGLER COLLECTION

When Wilhelm Furtwangler died in 1954 approximately thirty or so albums were available of his total recorded output, including both domestic and European sources. Unlike composers, conductors usually fade from public memory after their death. Their records are withdrawn and replaced by newer performances in the latest sound improvements. Recording executives reason that the public is only* interested in the "newest" and "latest" version of this or that symphony or concerto. Furtwangler has been one of the notable exceptions to this rule, along with his antipode, Arturo Toscanini. Today, thirteen years after his death, more than one hundred long playing records are currently available featuring Furtwangler as conductor and more are issued every year. Many of these records have come from public concerts and radio tapes, made mostly after the war, recorded either by RIAS in Berlin or the Austrian Radio in Vienna. In addition, Furtwangler's notable 1952 pro-

duction in Rome of Wagner's "Ring" Cycle was recorded by RAI and a move is now afoot to release this monumental project. A surprising number of wartime Furtwangler performances have turned up in, of all places, Russia. When the Red Army looted Berlin in 1945 it carried away, among other things, the entire archives of DNB, the official radio station. Included were tapes of Berlin Philharmonic concerts from 1939-1945, many conducted by Furtwangler and with several notable soloists. Finally realizing what a treasure they possessed, the Russians released in 1963 a series of seven long playing records featuring Furtwangler and the Berlin Philharmonic. Other releases are planned, and recently the BBC announced plans to issue some of their Furtwangler broadcasts, made from concerts in the late 1940's.

In Germany both Electrola and Deutsche Grammophon have plans to continue their Furtwangler cycles. The major English companies, E.M.I., Decca and H.M.V. have retained the conductor's recordings in their respective

catalogues, regardless of date. In the United States Angel Records is now releasing, through their low-priced label, Seraphim, various Furtwangler albums for which they share rights with some of the European firms.

The above facts would indicate a continuing interest in the art of this great and controversial musical giant. As younger audiences mature they tire of routine recordings of the twenty-fifth version of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, no matter how well it sounds, and in increasing numbers turn to recordings made by the "golden age of conductors." The legacies of such distinguished Furtwangler contemporaries as Willem Mengelberg, Bruno Walter, Fritz Reiner, and Serge Koussevitsky have been preserved and from time to time are being re-issued. And, of course, Furtwangler's only rival in fame, Toscanini, has hardly been forgotten by RCA Victor.

About twenty years ago the present music librarian began his Furtwangler Collection. Today, outside of the Archives of the German Government and the Furt-

wangler Estate, it is the most complete collection known. The Music Library is in the process of copying this collection on tape for use by all interested persons in the hope that it will generate fresh interest in the art of Wilhelm Furtwangler.

Thomas Zimmermann
Music Librarian
Fondren Library

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